

REMARKS

This paper is presented in response to the Office Action mailed October 26, 2007. Claim 9 is cancelled, and claims 1, 7 and 8 are amended. Claims 12-30 have been added. Claims 1-8 and 10-30 are now pending in view of the aforementioned cancellation.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

I. Objection to Claims 1-11

The Examiner has objected to claims 1-11, and claims 1 and 7 in particular, on various formal grounds. Claims 1, 7 and 8 have been amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner in the Office Action and claims 1 and 7, as well as their respective dependent claims 2-6, and 8 and 10-11, are now believed to be in allowable condition.

II. Cancellation of Claim 9

Claim 9 appears to be redundant of claim 7 and has accordingly been canceled.

III. Allowed Subject Matter

The Examiner's indication that claims 1-11 would be allowable, upon resolution of the formal matters identified in the Office Action, is appreciated. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the careful review and allowance of those claims.

Applicant submits the following comments concerning the Examiner's statements of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action. In general, Applicant agrees with the Examiner that the inventions to which claims 1-11 are directed are patentable over the cited references, but respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in the Office Action.

Particularly, Applicant submits that it is improper to characterize a single limitation, or subset of limitations, as constituting the basis for allowance of a claim. Rather, the patentability of a claim is properly determined with reference to the claim as a whole. Accordingly, Applicant does not concede that the reasons for allowable subject matter given by the Examiner are the

only reasons that make, or would make, claims 1-11 allowable and Applicant does not make any admission or concession concerning the Examiner's statements in the Office Action concerning the allowability of claims 1-11 in view of the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks submitted herein, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending claims 1-8 and 10-30 is in condition for allowance. Therefore, reconsideration of the objections and rejections is requested and allowance of those claims is respectfully solicited. In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that could be clarified in a telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 1st day of February 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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